

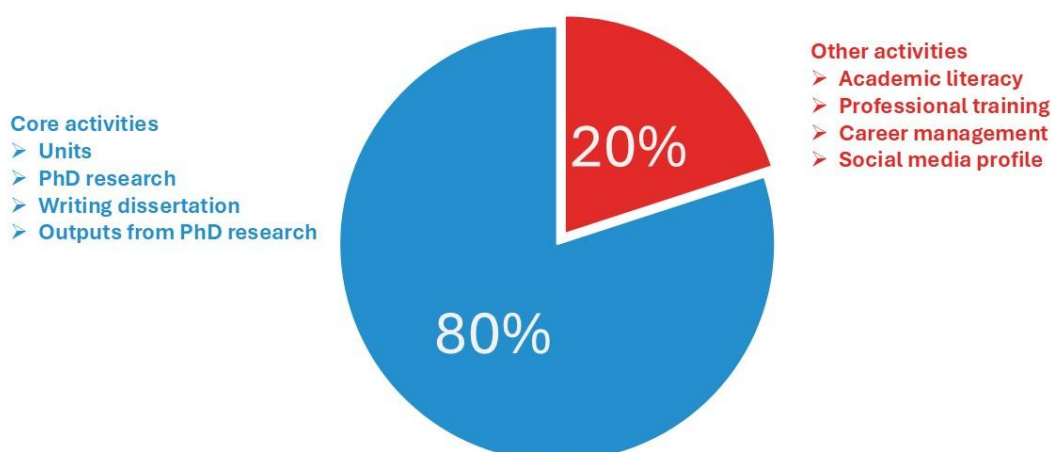


Development Needs Analysis (DNA)

If your SWDTP studentship funding began in September 2024 or later, you are expected to engage with Development Needs Analysis (DNA) on an ongoing basis as part of your PhD studies. The aim is to support you in developing skills, knowledge and experience that help you establish or meet personal and career aspirations, be it in academia or beyond. Funding is conditional on engagement with this important process.

Researcher Development is embedded in your studentship

The SWDTP suggests an approximate split where 80% of your time throughout your studentship is focused on core PhD project activities while the remaining 20% is focused on other development activities that help you gain research skills and knowledge, and meet personal and professional aspirations.



Development is personal and tailored

Your development is shaped by the goals you set, and continuously review, for yourself. Development can be thought of in these domains:

Research Skills and Knowledge The skills and knowledge needed to conduct robust and ethically sound research.	Academic Literacy The skills and knowledge expected for academic roles and leadership, and effective research communication.
Professional Development The skills and knowledge that improve	Wellbeing and Community The skills and knowledge that help you look



employability, career opportunities and networks in order to meet professional aspirations.	after your wellbeing, find your place within communities of support, and understand your part in furthering equality, diversity and inclusion in society.
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A wide range of activities can contribute to your development. The development needs evaluation matrix in your DNA log (see below) lists many examples, including:

- Training courses
- Attending seminars and symposia
- Research impact outputs
- Participating in writing retreats
- Peer reviewing
- Presenting at conferences

The many opportunities available is an exciting prospect for many students, but also an overwhelming one. The limited time you have during your funded period also means that you must often be selective of the activities you commit to. Regularly setting and reviewing your development goals will help you to do so, making the most of your available time. Our DNA log (see below) is designed to help you do this.

Finding development activities and opportunities

You will likely find development opportunities from many different sources, from your supervisor and home institution to cross-institutional groups and external associations, so don't forget to look far and wide. To help get you started, browse the SWDTP Events Calendar to search for events that we organise or support. Use our external resources directory to find activities from your Doctoral College, research centres and other external training providers.

[Go to Events Calendar](#)

[Go to Resources Directory](#)

Engaging with Development Needs Analysis (DNA)

Your engagement with Development Needs Analysis (DNA) began when you applied for an SWDTP studentship where you conducted a self-assessment of your skills and knowledge. This was analysed by the SWDTP and, where necessary, additional training and development activities (e.g. MRes, methodology units, self-directed learning etc.) were listed in your offer letter which you must undertake as a condition of your funding.

Throughout your funded period, you will also engage with the DNA process on an ongoing basis. Evidence of your engagement is recorded in a DNA log provided to you by the SWDTP hub. This resource is a OneNote document, the link for which is sent to you around



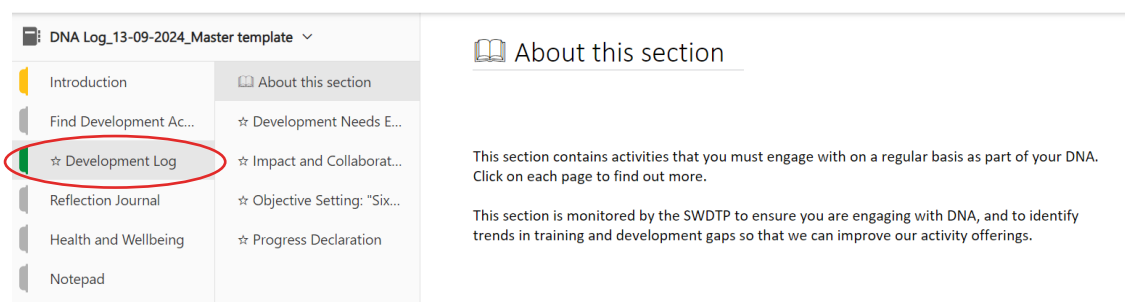
the commencement of your studentship. Using the DNA log, you are expected to engage in the following DNA activities:

- Regularly reflecting on any training and development activities that you do
- Evaluating whether activities are helping you reach your identified development needs, goals and aspirations
- Setting objectives to help you reach your identified development needs, goals and aspirations
- Completing the Progress Check declaration form for the different key activities listed

Parts of your DNA log will be monitored

Your ESRC funding is subject to your ongoing engagement with the SWDTP's Development Needs Analysis (DNA) process. ESRC also requires the SWDTP to capture and report on DNA data in order to determine current or future training and development needs. It is for these reasons only that the SWDTP must monitor your engagement with this resource.

We will monitor activity in all pages within the Development Log section of your DNA log. i.e. you must engage with the tools as instructed on these pages. These pages are marked with a star (☆)



We will monitor activity in all pages within the "Development Log" section of your DNA log

The following tools make up the Development Log. Further information and instructions can be found on their respective page:

Tool	Summary
Objective Setting: "Sixty Second Scribble"	Regularly set, review and reflect on your development goals. Rather than spending a lot of time to craft fully developed reflections entries, the prompts in this tool help you generate an ongoing log of short statements so you can keep track of your strengths, weaknesses, achievements and goals. Use these to identify your development needs and prioritise which opportunities to commit to.



Development Needs Evaluation Matrix	<p>Chart your development using this matrix, including what skills you've acquired or brought with you going into your PhD, and what you might want to prioritise going forward.</p> <p>Grouped by development domains, the example activities in each cell are merely ideas and suggestions. As you continue to populate the matrix with your past experiences and planned activities, you will see what progress you have made to meet your own objectives and aspirations, and what opportunities you can focus on exploring next. You will also have an up-to-date activity tracker that other students have found incredibly useful when completing their institutionally-required progress monitoring process.</p> <p>Use this matrix in tandem with the objective setting tool above to help you strategise your development.</p>
Impact and Collaboration Tracker	<p>Record your involvement in activities that deliver research impact. The suggested prompts in this tool will help you build impressive narratives to include in your CV or other professional profiles.</p>
Progress Declaration	<p>Use this self-declaration form to confirm with the SWDTP that you have completed a compulsory activity or component.</p>

Other parts of your log will not be monitored

We recognise that reflection can contain personal, confidential or sensitive information, therefore your engagement with other sections of the DNA log is optional and not monitored. However, we have included additional resources to help you support your development or to make the most of your reflections. This includes a journal of admirations for logging positive feedback, and prompts and templates to help you build your CV.

The SWDTP DNA process is separate from institutionally required progress monitoring/review processes

Engaging with DNA is separate from any training and development components required locally by your institution (e.g. progress monitoring, annual reviews, Vitae researcher development log etc.), and you are expected to engage with both. However, we have designed the tools and resources in this DNA log to complement, not overlap with, most institutionally-required tasks.

Using your DNA log to facilitate discussions with supervisors and other advisors

You are encouraged to use this log as an aid when discussing your development with supervisors, other advisors such as career services and wellbeing support staff, and mentors.